LEASING SPECIAL NEEDS HOUSING

Understanding the Roles and Responsibilities

Presenters:

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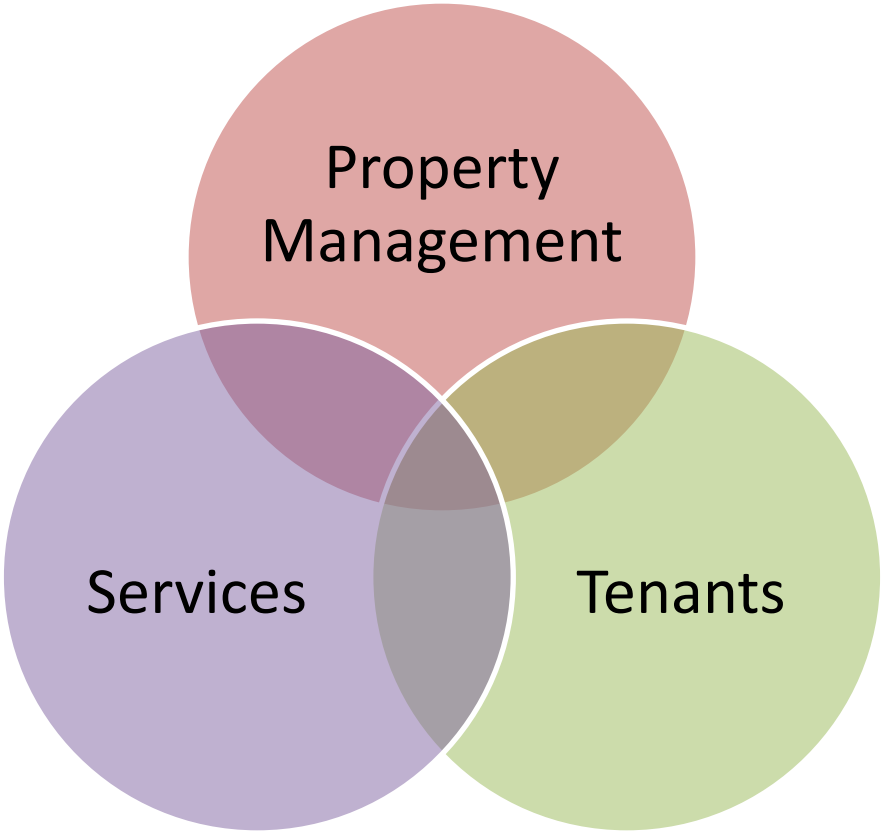
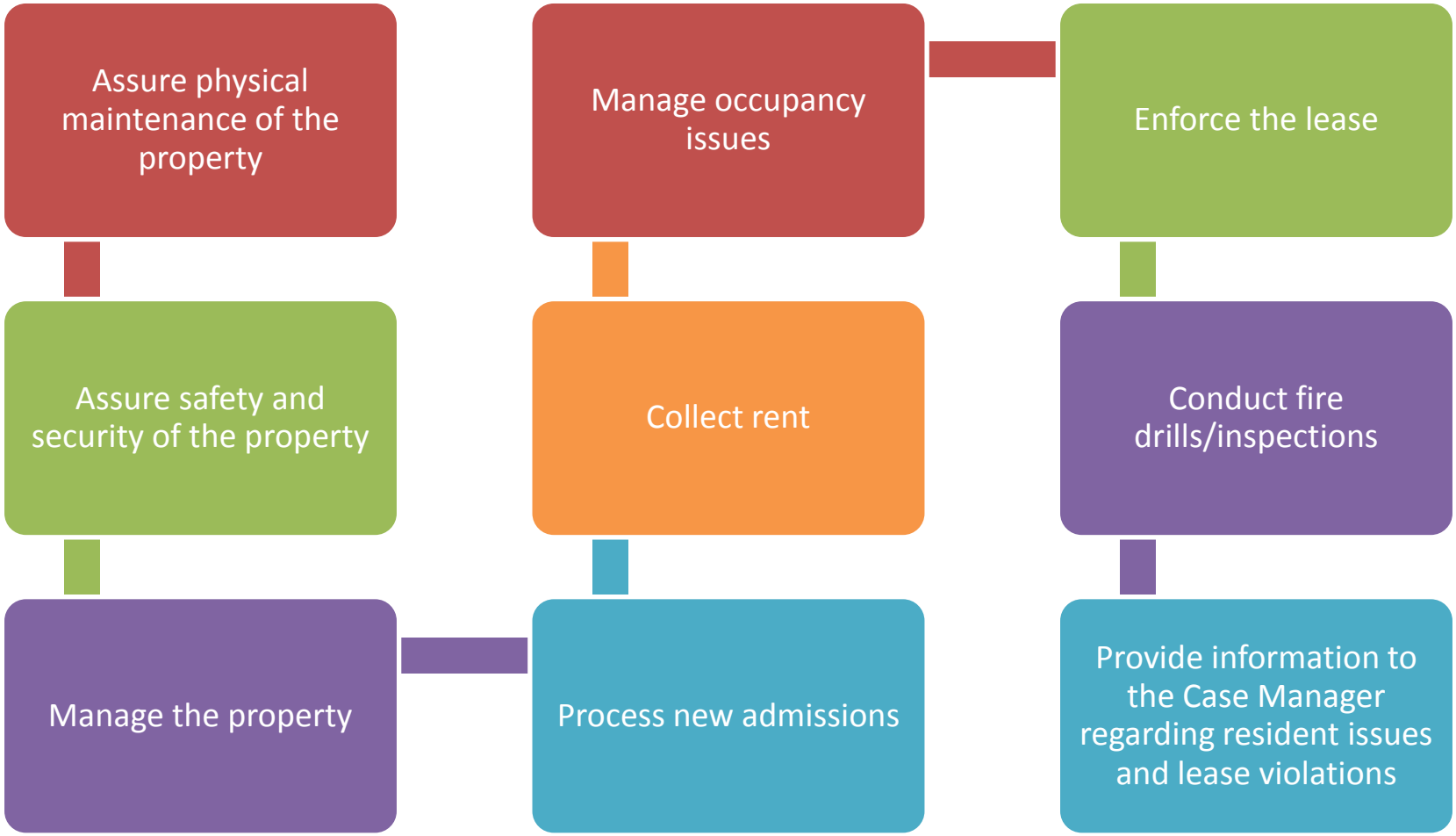
Leasing Special Needs Housing: Understanding Roles and Responsibilities:

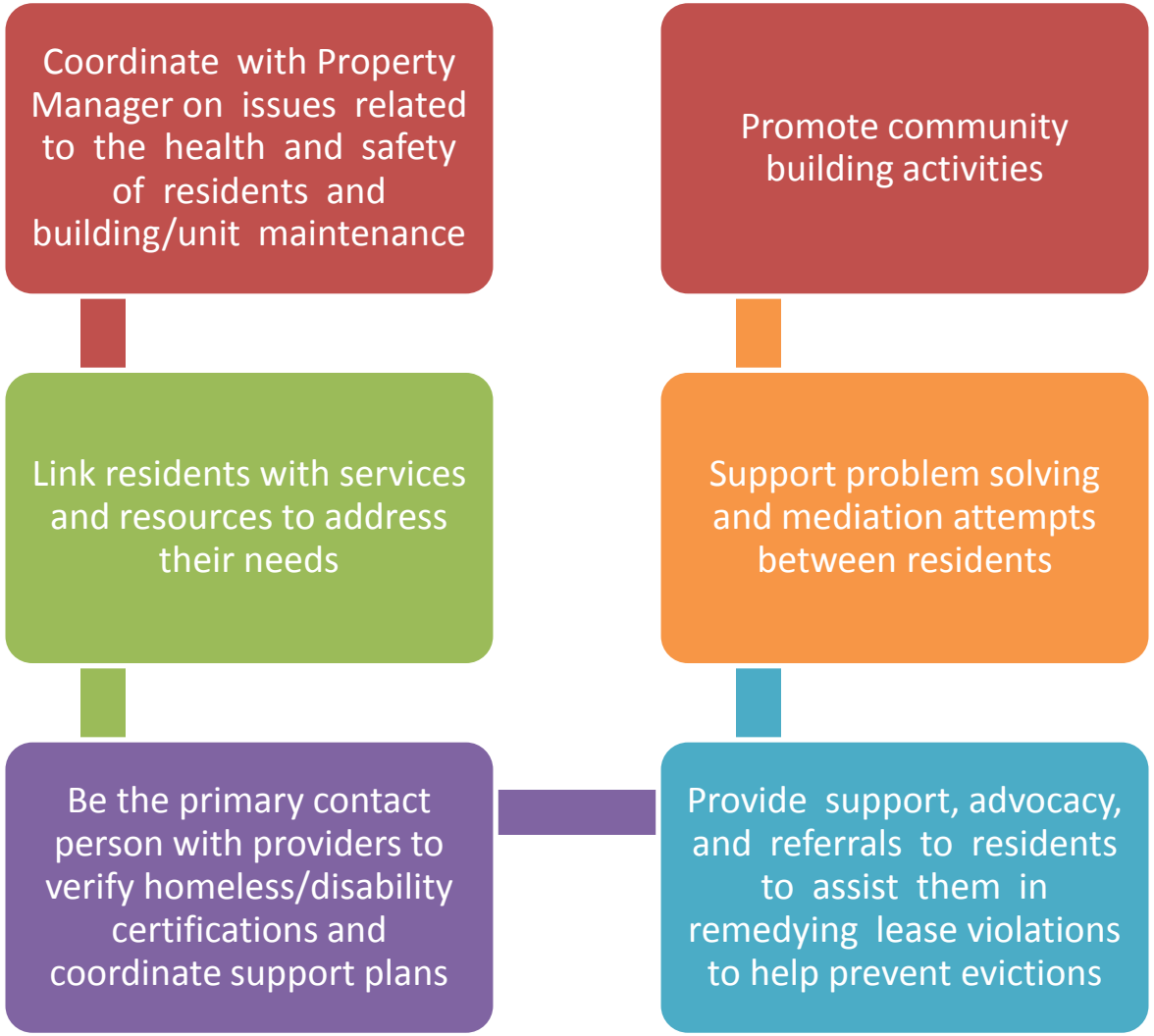


Successful Housing Teams

Property Management:



Services


Coordinate with Property Manager on issues related to the health and safety of residents and building/unit maintenance
Promote community building activities
Link residents with services and resources to address their needs
Support problem solving and mediation attempts between residents
Be the primary contact person with providers to verify homeless/disability certifications and coordinate support plans
Provide support, advocacy, and referrals to residents to assist them in remedying lease violations to help prevent evictions

Shared Roles:

Understanding Roles and Responsibilities During Lease Up

Philosophy (housing first, harm reduction, eviction prevention, housing retention) – During financing 2-3 years out

Roles and Responsibilities for all partners -12 months out

Establish Resident Selection Criteria – screening in vs. screening out - 12 months out

Tenant selection and target population, meetings with referral sources (CES, VI-SPDAT, DHS, wait list) – 6-12 months out

Create Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing plan – 6 - 12 months out

Lease and House Rules consistent with mission and population served – 12 months out

Hiring Lease Up Staff, post job descriptions, hire PM and Services staff, train staff – 3-6 months out

Team discuss Safety, wellness checks, Crisis Intervention, and team approaches – 3-6 months out

Creating rapport with applicants and relaying roles and responsibilities along with resident's expectations – 1-3 months out

Pre-Lease up Interviewing 1-3 months out. Staff start meeting with applicants, gathering and keeping documentation current

Move in process: Ensure all paperwork is current and services and PM coordinate to meet with each tenant to review/sign lease, introduce staff and roles, identify needs for resources (deposits, furniture, move-in kits)

Resident Selection Criteria:

Defines resident population

Details programmatic restrictions

Establishes occupancy standards

Defines rent/income/ restrictions

Establishes eligibility requirements

Defines grounds for denial:

- Criminal
- Credit
- Too much/little income

Appeal/accommodation process

Marketing Plan:

- Defines the application process
- Identifies where and how property will be marketed
- Calendars critical events
- Determines when and how will applications be given out
- Provides a timeline for application process
- Spells out all programmatic compliance requirements
- Summarizes income qualification requirements

Application Process:

Create process for wait list management based on how tenants are referred (CES, DHS, Wait List, etc.)

Property Management and Services collaborate to schedule intake with applicants

Ensure all paperwork is provided to applicant and coordinated with referring agency. This will assist with timelines on returning paperwork/expiration of paperwork, and all parties (management, housing authority, DMH, etc.) are noted to help expedite the process

Follow HIPPA guidelines and obtain consent when coordinating with referring agency around disability, to ensure services are verifying this information

Two Major Tiers of Eligibility:

1. Programmatic Compliance

- Usually determined through Case Manager, certified medical providers, and other professional (Confidential and sensitive information).

2. Income and other Qualification Requirements

- Usually determined by property management and third parties.

Compliance:

Services should collaborate and support tenants through the annual Housing Authority and Property Management recertification process

Services should have a copy of what Property Management and Housing Authority look for in housing inspections to ensure tenant passes

All files and HMIS (Homeless Management Information System - if applicable) should consistently be up to date on all consents, medical information, and documentation as required by funding agencies

Services should do regular home visits and be present during inspections to assist in tenant advocacy as needed

Programmatic Compliance:

- Qualifications may include:
- Homelessness (chronic homeless or homeless)
- Disability status
- MHSA eligibility (eligible and actively receiving services from DMH)
- Meet terms of defined Resident Selection

Income Qualification:

Most affordable housing/special need communities are financed with many different sources. Each of these funding sources comes with a layer of Regulatory restrictions defining terms of occupancy.

Income may not exceed a certain AMI

Applicant can not be a full time student (certain exceptions apply)

Applicant must meet criminal and credit background requirements

Applicant may be subject to prior landlord references

Third Party Verifications from all Income Sources:

Income sources eligibility is determined at the time of move in. It is very helpful to start working with clients to collect this information prior to the time applications are available

Requirements include:

Photo Identification

Social Security number (or ID number)

Third party verifications

3 months paycheck stubs

6 months banks statements

SSI Award Letters

Verification of Student Status

Assist Tenants With Maintaining Housing :

Ensures tenant is connected to community, mental health, recovery, and primary care supports

Mediates, Advocates, and Empowers tenants collaboratively with property management through conflict resolution, communication, and negotiation

Liaison between property management, tenant, and support networks to develop a housing retention plan to achieve overall goal of maintaining permanent housing